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News Release

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Jury finds Eden Prairie woman guilty of health care fraud, money laundering

After nearly eight hours of deliberation, a federal jury issued a guilty verdict Dec. 13 against an Eden Prairie woman who defrauded Medica out of approximately \$1.5 million in a health care fraud conspiracy.

At the U.S. Courthouse in Minneapolis, Indadeeq Omar, 44, was found guilty of one count of health care fraud conspiracy, 12 counts of health care fraud, one count of money laundering conspiracy, 19 counts of concealment money laundering, seven counts of promotion money laundering and six counts of aggravated identity theft. Her husband, Mohamed Essa, 51, was also indicted in the conspiracy, and is a fugitive believed to be outside of the United States.

U.S. District Judge Joan N. Ericksen thanked the jury for their efforts during the seven-day trial, and placed Omar under house arrest for one week to get her affairs in order before reporting to the U.S. Marshals.

Omar was indicted via a second superseding indictment on Nov. 14 on 46 criminal counts by a grand jury in connection with the conspiracy against Medica, a health care benefit program.

Omar conducted the conspiracy starting Jan. 1, 2001 through December 2004. The object of the conspiracy was to fraudulently obtain money from Medica by submitting claims for translation services that had not been rendered to Medica members.

Omar owned and operated Global Interpreter Corp., which contracted with Medica to provide translation services to members who required such services when being treated by health care providers. Omar received member information and dates of medical visits from a Medica employee, so that they could submit false claims that corresponded with dates on which members had actual medical visits.

When Medica began to question Omar about the number of claims, she refused to provide back up documentation supporting the claims.

Omar engaged in financial transactions designed to promote the health care fraud scheme,

and conceal and disguise the nature and source of the illegally obtained health care fraud proceeds, the indictment also stated. Omar prepared Global checks listing fictitious interpreters as payees, and negotiated a number of checks and deposited the cash into bank accounts she controlled in her name, the names of her children and under the business name. The funds were transferred between accounts, and eventually used to purchase various assets.

A third defendant involved in the conspiracy, Tou Chaiker Vang, 39, Maplewood, pleaded guilty on Aug. 28 to one count of money laundering conspiracy and one count of health care fraud conspiracy. Vang was employed by Medica in the State Public Programs customer service department. He cooperated with investigators and testified in court against Omar, and is awaiting sentencing.

The jury also found that two homes located in Eden Prairie, and a 2005 Chrysler 300C were involved in the money laundering conspiracy, and are subject to forfeiture to the U.S. government.

Omar faces a potential maximum penalty of five years on the conspiracy charge, 10 years on each health care fraud charge, 20 years on the money laundering conspiracy charge, 20 years on each concealment money laundering charge, 20 years on each promotion money laundering charge, and two years on each identity theft charge. Judge Ericksen will determine her sentence at a later date, which has not been scheduled.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations Division and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Inspector General, with the assistance of the Medica Special Investigations Unit, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys John R. Marti and William J. Otteson.